

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed July 14, 2003, the Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration.

To further the prosecution of this application, amendments have been made in the claims, as illustrated above, under the sub-heading *Listing of the Claims*.

Claims 1-42 were previously pending in this application. By this amendment, Applicant cancels claims 24 and 28 without prejudice or disclaimer, and amends claims 13, 25, 29-32 and 39-42. As a result, claims 13-23, 25-27 and 29-42 are pending for examination, of which claims 13, 25 and 39-42 are independent.

1. Claims 13-23 Are In Condition For Allowance

Claims 13-23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as purportedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,225,165 (Noble) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,719,411 (Ajit). Further, the Office Action states that claim 24 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Although Applicant believes that claim 13 patentably distinguishes over Noble in view of Ajit, Applicant has amended claim 13 to avoid further delay in the prosecution of this application. Specifically, Applicant has amended claim 13 (i.e., the base claim) as shown above to include all of the limitations of claim 24 (it should be appreciated that there are no intervening claims between claim 13 and claim 24). Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 13, as amended, patentably distinguishes over Noble in view of Ajit, and respectfully submits that the rejection of claim 13 under §103(a) be withdrawn.

Claims 14-23, which each depends directly or indirectly from independent claim 13, patentably distinguish over Noble in view of Ajit for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 13. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 14-23 under §103(a) be withdrawn.

2. Claims 25-27 and 29-42 Are In Condition For Allowance

Claims 25-27 and 33-38 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as purportedly being unpatentable over Noble in view of Ajit. Further, claims 28-32 and 29-42 stand objected to as

being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Although Applicant believes that claim 25 patentably distinguishes over Nobel in view of Ajit, Applicant has amended claim 25 to avoid further delay in the prosecution of this application. Specifically, Applicant has amended claim 25 (i.e., the base claim) to include all of the limitations of claim 28. Further, Applicant has amended claims 29-32 to recite dependency from claim 25 as opposed to claim 28. Applicant also has amended each of claims 39-42 to include all of the limitations of independent claim 25 (i.e., the base claim).

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 25 and 39-42, as amended, patentably distinguish over Noble in view of Ajit, and requests that the rejection of these claims under §103(a) be withdrawn. Claims 26, 27 and 29-38, which each depend directly or indirectly from independent claim 25, patentably distinguish over Noble in view of Ajit for at least the same reasons as set forth above with respect to claim 25. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of these claims under §103(a) be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

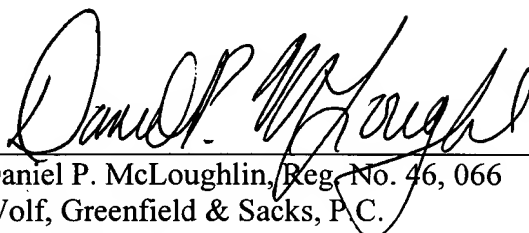
In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, this application should now be in condition for allowance. A notice to this effect is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes, after this amendment, that the application is not in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the Applicant's attorney at the telephone number listed below.

If this response is not considered timely filed and if a request for an extension of time is otherwise absent, Applicant hereby requests any necessary extension of time. If there is a fee

occasioned by this response, including an extension fee that is not covered by an enclosed check, please charge any deficiency to Deposit Account No. 23/2825.

Respectfully submitted
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